



ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE STAINMOOR PASS

At the December meeting of the Appleby Archaeology Group members enjoyed a talk by Niall Hammond, until recently the County Archaeologist for Durham, on the Archaeology of the Stainmore Pass. Mr Hammond described the findings of work done, prior to the widening of the A66 over Stainmore Pass in 1989-91. The talk was illustrated by a series of informative slides.

The earliest evidence of human activity on Stainmore was the finding of worked flints which may indicate that there was a seasonal camp site in the mesolithic period (10000-4000BC). A record of pollen taken from a core sample of peat and carbon dating suggests that from 8000 BC the weather declined and by 1600BC the higher ground was abandoned and that the crops that were grown were rye and oats. From 3500BC there are rich sources of evidence which includes field systems, hut circles, burial cairns, and signs of ploughing. A complex of the different types of monuments can be identified at East Mellwater Farm

An indication that the pass was an important route from early times was the find of a hoard of metal work at Gilmonby that included socket axes, spearheads and uncast bronze presumably buried by the metal worker for safe keeping.

The Romans invaded Britain in 43AD. The northern tribe, the Brigantes, rebelled against them about AD70 and there is evidence of the Romans exerting their influence from that time. There was a marching camp at Rey Cross where the army halted overnight. The camp enclosed by an earth and stone rampart with an external ditch would have provided temporary accommodation for a legion of 6000 men. Later pieces of Roman pottery tell us that the camp was used again in the third century. The trans-Pennine route was protected by forts at Bowes and Akilns. Lime would have been in demand both for mortar and land improvement. The road itself is very difficult to date, several sections were examined and below the modern surface there is evi-

dence of 20-30 surfaces but it is impossible to tell which are Roman and which later as no artefacts, such as coins, were found. It is however unlikely that between the Romans leaving and 1760s that there was any maintenance.

Mr Hammond was warmly thanked for taking the group over the Stainmore Pass through the centuries, and describing the history of that landscape.

Phyllis Rouston

WANTED

Volunteers to join our small friendly committee.

We meet four times a year to keep the group running and plan future events.

No experience necessary!

Current vacancies include:

Chairperson

Publicity

Please contact us if you can help or complete the form enclosed.

Contents:

PAGE 2 A visit to Kendal Record Office

PAGE 3 STONE CIRCLES: Geometry and Alignments

PAGE 4 Winter Events Page

A Visit to

KENDAL RECORD OFFICE

by Phyllis Rouston

The first meeting of the autumn saw members of the Appleby Archaeology Group visiting the County Records Office in Kendal where they enjoyed an informative evening under the guidance of Richard Hall Assistant County Archivist.

He began by explaining the functions of the Record Office and describing the type of records kept. Kendal Office is one of four in the county and each houses the records of what were the constituent counties pre 1974, Kendal housing the records of what was Westmorland. The other offices are in Carlisle, Whitehaven and Barrow. The four offices provide a decentralised service reflecting the old counties. There are two other offices in Carlisle, a modern records unit and a conservation unit. When the Kendal office first opened in 1962 the records were stored and cared for, but there was no service to the public as there is today. The records kept cover a period of 800 years, the earliest are from Appleby. Certain records have to be deposited, these include all public records such as local authority records and those of the bodies which predated these authorities. All parish records over 100 years old have to be deposited.

Kendal has a range of church records from Tudor times which give insight into everyday life

The majority of the records held are unofficial these include family and business records which have been given to the office for safekeeping at no charge to the owner but on the understanding that they are available to the public. There is a closure period of 100 years on confidential documents such as criminal and health records. The records are arranged according to their origin and indexed in broad categories for example societies, schools and businesses. The indexes are the fish fair, but probably not the horse fair that continues to this day.

A fascinating insight was gained both into the role of Record Offices and what is available in Kendal. A warm vote of thanks was expressed to Richard Hall.

For further details about the services of the Kendal Record Office telephone (01539) 773428 or write to:
Kendal Record Office,
County Offices, Kendal
LA9 4RQ

To visit the offices you will need a reader's card which can be obtained at the office free of charge. You will need to take some form of identification.

AGM 2002

Our fourth Annual general meeting will take place at the Appleby Grammar School on 15th January 2002. Included with this newsletter are a copy of the minutes of the last AGM and a proposed new constitution. The new constitution includes amendments in sections 4 and 5 regarding the number and roles of committee members and terms of office. This has been added in order to answer the questions raised at the previous AGM. Please read it through before the January meeting.

Also at this AGM I shall be resigning from my role as chairman. I have fulfilled the role for the past four years and have now started an MA in Archaeological Survey at Durham. Consequently I do not have as much time to devote to the group. I have watched the group grow from a membership of two to over fifty and enjoyed the great variety of talks and events we have held over the years, none of which would have been possible without your support. I have also made many friends along the way. I shall continue to be part of Appleby Archaeology and support as many events as I can. I will also continue to produce the newsletter and sit on the committee for the time being if the membership approves at the AGM. In the mean time the role remains vacant. Does anyone fancy a turn at the reigns?

Martin Railton

STONE CIRCLES:

Their Geometry and Alignments

Stone circles: Their Geometry and Alignments was the title of an intriguing talk given by David Risk to Appleby Archaeology Group at their November meeting.

Mr Risk introduced his subject by showing a number of slides of stone circles as he described some of their features, commenting that most discoveries about circles have been made by non archaeologists. 3000 circles have been noted in Britain of which a 1000 survive with 65 in Cumbria. In the Crosby Ravensworth area there are 6 confirmed circles and possibly 2 more. The circles are usually in ruins. Over the centuries damage has been caused by farming and the development of roads, railways and building. One slide of a circle near Crosby Ravensworth showed the site was bisected by a dry stone wall. Circles vary in size, the largest, Avebury in Wiltshire, has a diameter of 325m in contrast to a circle off the Crosby Ravensworth Shap road which has a diameter of 3-4m. Stonehenge has a diameter of 30m and nearer home Long Meg and her Daughters has a diameter of over 90m.

According to Aubrey Burl some of the stones at Long Meg are calculated to weigh 30 tons and he has suggested that it would have required 30 men to raise one. From this a calculation has been made of the population of the area at the time the circle was built.

In Invernesshire and Aberdeenshire circles are found that hav-

ains. The large circles are thought to be the older. Castlerigg dated to 3200BC may be the oldest circle in Cumbria if only that most stone circles and standing stones seem to incorporate astronomical alignments in their design. The frequency of alignments found to the winter and summer solstices, the equinoxes and the Celtic festivals led Thom to suggest that there was a Neolithic calendar of 8 or 16 months. These ideas of Thom's set people thinking and archaeo-astronomy is now an accepted discipline.

It is probable that the smaller circles have no astrological significance. Examples of circles where astronomic function are strong are Callanish on the Island of Lewis, Castlerigg in Cumbria and Stonehenge. Those present were certainly intrigued to learn that on Mayday Long Meg can be aligned to Castlerigg, Fiends Fell and Little Meg. A number of questions were taken before Mr Risk was thanked for a stimulating and interesting talk.

Phyllis Rouston



Roman Carlisle
by Mike McCarthy
Wed 27th March 2002
Tullie House, Carlisle

A talk at Tullie House museum on Carlisle's rich archaeological heritage and what it reveals about life in a Romano-British town.
Starts at 7.30pm
Tel. 01228 534781 ext.210

CNWRS
Archaeology
Conference
Lancaster University
Sat 9th March 2002
The annual conference of the Centre for North West Regional Studies comprises a whole day of talks about local archaeology along with exhibits and stalls. Subjects this year include: Roman military buildings at Arbeia and Segedunum, Vindolanda 2000-2001, A Bronze Age cemetery at Allithwaite, Lake District Landscapes, Prehistoric and Roman - British settlements, Pre-conquest sculpture in North Lancashire and the Old Dock in Liverpool.

To book a place telephone the centre on 01524 593770. Or visit the website at: www.lancs.ac.uk/users/cnwrs

EVENTS

AGM &
Member's Evening
Tue 15th January 2002

Appleby Grammar School

The fourth Annual General Meeting of Appleby Archaeology now begins at **7.00pm**, followed by a short talk by Liz Hawkins on the Carlisle Record office at 7.30pm. Please bring your own ideas for future talks, events and any other activities for 2002.

PLEASE NOTE THAT
SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2002
ARE NOW DUE

Medieval Defences of
the Eden Valley
with Niall Maguire

Tue 5th March 7.00pm
Appleby Grammar School
This talk will explore the network of castles and other defences that arose in the medieval period to defend the Eden Valley. Niall will be introducing the evidence on the ground as well as documentary evidence for a network of defences including a series of beacon sites which once existed across Cumbria.

Our next meeting will be on Tues 2nd April with Andrew Lowe of the Lake District

CRAKETREES
Medieval House

Sat 23rd March 2002
Crosby Ravensworth
Meet at the Church at 1.00pm.

Christopher Dunn and Ian Goodall of English Heritage are giving us a guided tour around the site of Craketrees House in Crosby Ravensworth. It will be good to be outside again! Members of Crosby Ravensworth Local History Society are also invited.

The Kilmartin Valley
A prehistoric landscape Field Trip 17th-19th May

Come with us to Kilmartin Glen, in Argyll, which has the greatest concentration of Prehistoric monuments in Scotland including the Largie Standing Stones, the stone and timber circles at Temple Wood and dozens of cairns, and henges. The Glen is world famous for rock carvings and at Achnabreck, has the largest cluster of Cup and Rings marks in Britain.

Following the cancelled trip last year due to Foot & Mouth we are now re-organizing our visit. For further details and accommodation information contact Harry Hawkins on 01786 864340.